

**The Tasmanian Government and the Metal Mining
Industry ~ An Administrative History: 1880-1914**

by

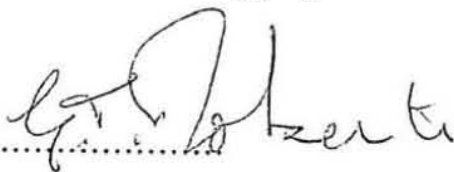
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This thesis does not contain any material which has been accepted for a degree or diploma by the University of Tasmania or any other institution, except by way of background information which is duly acknowledged. To the best of my knowledge and belief, nothing previously published or written by another person is used, except where due acknowledgment is made.

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PREFACE

Original measurements of length, area and mass have been retained and a conversion table is provided in Appendix H.

Monetary values in use at the time are also retained since realistic modern equivalents which take account of great changes in social factors are difficult to formulate after such a long time period.

Reference notes are provided for the abbreviations used as source material. With the exception of Government documents, the convention used for subsequent references to an initial source is by giving the author's name followed by an abbreviated title.

ABSTRACT

This dissertation carries forward in time earlier work concerned with the relationship between the Tasmanian government and the metal mining industry from the foundation of the colony in 1804. It covers the period from 1880 to 1914.

By 1880, metal mining was well established as a major industry, vying with agriculture as the economic driving force. As the industry grew, the Government was faced with increasing problems resulting from a lack of infrastructure in the main mineral fields which were located in largely uninhabited areas in the northern half of the state. In order to maintain control and offer assistance, the Government gradually increased the numbers of administrative and technical staff, albeit sometimes reluctantly. Particularly in the technical area, politicians were sometimes slow to address shortcomings, for example in data collection. This resulted in delays between the onset of problems and appropriate official reaction, often to the detriment of the industry progress.

Earlier work adopted a continuous narrative approach but the increasing complexity of issues arising from 1880 necessitated a change to more rigorous discussion of specific topics. Whilst no attempt has been made to compare Tasmanian practices with those in other colonies, relevant observations are made where appropriate.

Chapters 1 and 2 review the political background and the roles played by the civil service. Chapter 3 discusses the importance of education in an industry changing from the use of simple techniques to a more sophisticated environment requiring skilled men. Chapter 4 traces the growth of legislation in response to change and specific Government initiatives adopted to assist mining development are described in Chapter 5.

The successes and shortcomings of Government involvement in the main mining fields are discussed in Chapter 6-9. Development of the North East tin fields is the subject of Chapter 6 The West Coast south of the Pieman River figures in Chapters 7, 8 and 9. Chapters 7 and 8 are concerned with general developmental issues while Chapter 9 examines in more detail the particular practical and political problems posed in deciding on and providing satisfactory all-season access between the remainder of the colony and the West Coast.

Eight appendices and ten figures are included. Figs. 1 and 2 summarise basic data in time-line form. Figs. 3, 6, 7, 8 and 9 are designed to assist with an areal appreciation of the mining fields in a colony-wide context, while more detailed locations of specific features are illustrated for the North East (Fig. 4) and the West Coast (Figs. 5 and 10).

